

College of Education News

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Georgia Southern University

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MEP Middle School Students Enjoy Summer Enrichment

June 19, 2013



Children of migrant workers often find themselves falling behind in school because of frequent moves. That's why the federally funded Migrant Education Program (MEP) was created. Georgia runs its MEP through the Department of Education.

For the first time, Georgia Southern University was host to a group of MEP middle schoolers from across the state who spent a week here in enrichment classes ranging from mathematics to leadership skills. Not only was it a first for Georgia Southern, this summer's program was the first MEP for middle schoolers.

That's how COE's Katie Brkich found herself in a room with 20 sixth, seventh and eighth graders along with several interpreters teaching math and science/engineering. An Assistant Professor in Teaching & Learning with a special interest in migrant education and Latino/a science education, Brkich used hands-on explorations of human body proportional reasoning and data graphing for her mathematics class and ran a week-long investigation in the science of bubbles with her students for science/engineering. "While blowing bubbles may seem like child's play, it is actually the result of numerous scientific concepts and many applications of product and materials engineering working simultaneously," Brkich explained.

All the MEP summer programs are extremely popular, said Oscar Cardenas, the adolescent outreach specialist for MEP in Georgia's Department of Education. But he was surprised by the response to the middle school program. "We received more than 100 applications for 20 spots," Cardenas said. The final group represents children from 12 Georgia counties. Cardenas said he was particularly happy to be on the Georgia Southern campus. "We want to give these kids a college experience," he added, which may translate into a greater desire to reach college. Through the College of Education, the students got to try-on the roles of mathematician, scientist, inventor, and engineer. "We hope these experiences provide them motivation to pursue these areas further in the future," Brkich said.

Caption: Dr. Brkich with middle school students in MEP experimenting with bubbles.